whole Earth newsletter

MARCH 1992 Vol. XXI, No. 3

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Hartlands Serve Ohio Conference

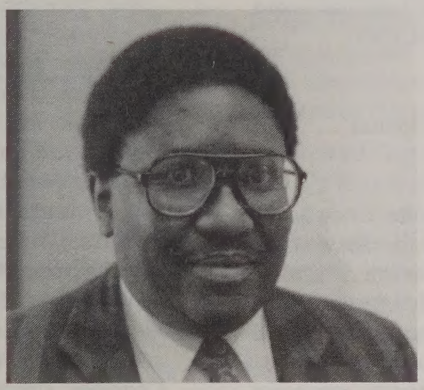
Part of the new understanding of mission today is that Christians from other places have something to offer U.S. Christians. The Rev. Cyril Hartland and his wife Nomazizi have been sent by the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa to serve in the Ohio Conference in 1992.

Asked shortly after his arrival the end of January what he expected to do in the Ohio Conference, Cyril Hartland replied, "I want to be led by the Spirit. I want to listen and learn. I am not here with an agenda. I don't want to impose myself." Reflecting on the experience of the early missionaries to Africa, who often imposed their own culture on the people they met and supported their own countries' political agendas, Cyril indicated he hopes to avoid that mistake. At the same time he will try to bring his insights into the gospel and his understandings of what makes for vital worship to the churches of the Ohio Conference.

Cyril Hartland brings direct experience with the harshness of apartheid. He was twice detained (imprisoned) for his activities on behalf of his people, once for seven and one-half months, the second time for nine weeks, followed by a year of banning. Banning means that you are not allowed to meet with the press. You cannot be cited as a source, and no one can quote you. Nothing you have written can be published. You have no political rights; it is almost as if you do not exist. One irony of his incarceration, he says, was that detainees were given a copy of the Bible. That Bible was his constant friend and companion and was the word of hope for him.

Cyril Hartland is pastor of the 400-member Congregational Church of Fort Beaufort, South Africa. In addition to serving this urban congregation, he is responsible for the pastoral care of 18 outstations.

Africa Secretary Returns Home



Dr. Bonganjalo Goba, UCBWM Regional Secretary for Africa since 1988, returned to his native South Africa in late December 1991, saying, "It's time to go home." Though leaving the U.S., Dr. Goba will continue to assist the United Church Board for World Ministries as Field Associate during 1992. In this role, he will carry special responsibility for helping to nuture the UCBWM's partnerships with churches in the independent nations of Southern Africa.

During 1992, the Rev. Dan Hoffman of Indianapolis, who is the Africa Executive for the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), will serve as Acting Africa Secretary for the UCBWM.

Common Overseas Personnel Office Takes Shape

All screening and interviewing of potential applicants for overseas service for the United Church Board for World Ministries (UCC) and the Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is now being conducted in common, in a move aimed at the eventual creation of a Common Overseas Personnel Office. Work is proceeding on the development of common policies and procedures for all overseas appointments. Common processing began March 1, 1992.

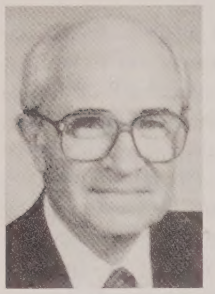
The Rev. Julia Brown Karimu, Vice-President and Personnel Executive for the DOM, has assumed responsibilities as Acting Mission Personnel Secretary for the UCBWM. Her office is located in Indianapolis (Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206). George McMillin, Administrative Associate in the UCBWM Overseas Personnel Office, will remain in New York. Evelyn Wilson, who has served as Interim UCBWM Overseas Personnel Secretary since the retirement of Elinor Galusha in June 1990, retired March 30.

UCC Delegation Attends Earth Summit

At least 35 persons from the United Church of Christ will participate in an NGO (non-governmental organizations) conference being held parallel to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED—Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June. (See Issue Perspective, pp. 6-7.) Susan Peacock, Secretary for Global Education and Advocacy, and Erich Mathias, Africa Program Assistant, will represent the United Church Board for World Ministries. UCC missionary Linda Petrucelli, who works with the Fishermen's Service Center in Taiwan, will be present also.

The UCBWM office for Racial and Ethnic Minority Constituency Development and Recruitment is providing scholarships to help several high school students attend the Earth Summit. The UCC interest group NEER (Network for Environmental and Economic Responsibility) is also well represented.

Message from the EVP



A beautiful bronze plaque stands outside a brick and stone building in Farmington, CT. This plaque celebrates an important part of our history as the United Church of Christ in the United States.

The plaque says, very simply, "Here was founded...the oldest U.S. society for FOREIGN MISSIONS."

The reference is to the 1810 founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM).

—To be faithful tellers of the good news . . .
—To spread the knowledge of the holy scriptures . . .
—To support missionaries . . .

These are key objectives stated clearly in the first charter voted by the House of Representatives and the Senate, and approved by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1812. The history of the ABCFM, joined with the important and faithful stream of mission service from the Board of International Missions of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, is part of the story of missions which is continued today in the United Church Board for World Ministries. And *Whole Earth Newsletter* is a continuation of the *Missionary Herald,* founded in 1805 to tell that story.

The Constitution of the United Church of Christ (USA) recognizes the United Church Board for World Ministries to be its agency "For the planning and conduct of its program of mission and service abroad and of emergency relief everywhere."

The United Church Board for World Ministries (with the General Synod electing 225 members from local churches to form the group determining policy and program direction for the UCBWM) strives to continue faithfully in ministries of evangelism, witness, service and worship.

The context for mission in 1992 is radically different than it was in 1810. The content of mission, "Telling the story and sharing the holy scriptures" is the same. We continue to be evangelists, "Those who share in proclaiming the good news." We continue to send persons to be missionaries, "Those who share in seeking to be the presence of the good news."

In 1992 we also recognize and celebrate the reality of the churches in each place, some with particular historical connections to us. With these churches, and through broad ecumenical relationships as well, we seek to help the United Church of Christ (USA) find itself in covenanted and mutual ministries participating in God's one mission.

The United Church Board for World Ministries' official policy defines the guidelines for our program of mission:

—The United Church of Christ (USA), through the UCBWM, is actively and passionately engaged in proclaiming the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world.

—We join partner churches and ecumenical bodies of the church in telling the gospel story, in reaching out to those who suffer and in standing alongside those who are oppressed.

—With partner churches we celebrate the embodiment of love and support as we are present with and to each other. We share love and the gifts of individuals in the sending and receiving of persons who serve in mission.

—We affirm that when the word is proclaimed and the cup of water is shared a new fullness of life happens. Communities of faith gather in song, prayer and praise; homes are built, food is provided, health care is available; and our sisters and brothers find expanded opportunities to participate as decision makers in shaping their own lives.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17)

Today many Christians find themselves among peoples of diverse faiths. For Christians these are places and opportunities to witness, and also to look for and listen to the grace and mystery of God's Spirit. We share the World Council of Churches' affirmation which states, "We cannot point to any other way of salvation than Jesus Christ. At the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God." Christians and persons of other faith communities may find common cause for serving goals of justice and peace for the whole of humankind. Witnessing as part of the calling to proclaim and witnessing to discover what God may be doing in God's own mysterious way motivates the church to be open to interfaith relationships.

The United Church Board for World Ministries is an old mission society. By God's grace, and the gift of God's Spirit, may it be "ever new."

The calling and challenge continue as we move into these last years of the 20th century. We strive to serve the United Church of Christ (USA) in the call which comes to the United Church of Christ (USA) to live and serve within its own faithful identity as a place and part of Christ's evangelistic and ecumenical church, serving God's mission in and for the world.

Scott Libby

Continuing the Missionary Herald, founded in 1805, Whole Earth Newsletter is published three times a year by the United Church Board for World Ministries, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115. There are no restrictions on the use or duplication of material contained herein. Editor: Sandra J. Rooney; Editorial Assistant, Helen Hayes. Annual subscription, $2.00.

After the War—What Now?

by Dale Bishop, Middle East Secretary, United Church of Christ,
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the National Council of Churches/USA

Analysts have given the Gulf War mixed reviews. Kuwait was freed of its Iraqi occupiers, but the returning Kuwaiti royal family has shown little inclination to institute democratic reforms. Saddam Hussein's army was routed, but the man described by President Bush as "another Hitler" remains in power in Iraq. Iraq's nascent nuclear arms program was interrupted, if not destroyed, but the Middle East's thirst for arms has not been slaked. The U.S. emerged from the war as the most powerful actor in the region, but seemed unwilling or unable to use its undisputed influence to create a new and peaceful order in the Middle East.

". . . after all the sound and fury, the desert looks pretty much the same as it did before the storm."

In this respect, the U.S. administration's choice of a name for its Gulf War operation—"Desert Storm"—proved to be uncannily apt. Middle Easterners familiar with desert storms note that they produce great turbulence and wildly blowing sand that can blind those caught in them, but after all the sound and fury, the desert looks pretty much the same as it did before the storm. What are some of the enduring realities "after the war"?

Economic Disparities

The Middle East is home to some of the world's wealthiest people, but 92% of Middle Easterners live in countries that, like much of the rest of the Third World, carry a heavy external debt. Egypt, for example, owed over $70 billion before the war. While about one-third of that debt was forgiven as a reward for Egypt's participation in the coalition against Iraq, Egyptian workers have not been invited to return to Kuwait to assist in the rebuilding of the country. Some 300,000 Egyptian workers formerly employed in the Gulf now seek work in their own poor and overpopulated country. This represents a double peril: Egypt's economy is deprived of workers' remittances and, at the same time, is forced to find a place for them in a society plagued by un- and underemployment.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Saddam Hussein, despite his miserable reputation throughout the region, was able to benefit from the discontent of the "have-nots" in the Arab world. Even in countries that joined the coalition against Iraq, there were powerful currents of support for the man who challenged the economic power of the Gulf states. Countries sufficiently free to allow open expression of dissent—Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia and Yemen, for example—tended either to tilt toward Iraq or to remain neutral in the conflict. Elsewhere, people who disagreed with their own country's role were unable to express their opposition openly.

Militarism

Saddam Hussein's obsession with weapons of mass destruction is, unfortunately, not unusual in the Middle East. In recent years, over half of the world's arms transfers have been destined for this region, and 85 to 90 percent of the arms provided to Middle Eastern countries, including Iraq, have come from the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

Currently, one Middle Eastern country, Israel, has nuclear weapons; Iraq, Iran and Libya have had nuclear programs. In addition, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya and Israel are all believed to have stocks of chemical weapons. It is ironic that the U.S. only moved to strip Iraq of its chemical weaponry during the Gulf crisis and war. Iraq had already used poison gas in its war with Iran and against its own Kurdish population.

In the wake of the war, there is no indication that Middle Eastern countries have given up their search for military advantages against each other. Nor is there any indication that arms manufacturers will easily relinquish their lucrative Middle Eastern market.

Unresolved Regional Issues

Iraq's justification for its attempted annexation of Kuwait was in part based upon the artificiality of the boundaries that define Middle Eastern countries. In fact, all the boundaries in the region, including Iraq's, were the creation of the colonial powers dominant there at the turn of the century. Those boundaries, although surprisingly durable, have nevertheless been a source of continuing conflict and tension in the region.

The most persistent of the boundary questions has been the question of Palestine and Israel. Saddam Hussein attempted to benefit from accumulated resentment over this question when he tried to link his invasion of Kuwait to the plight of the Palestinians. This ploy failed him, and misled many Palestinians who were desperate for any ally—any ally. After the war, the situation of the Palestinians has worsened: those in the West Bank and Gaza have suffered increased repression; those in Kuwait and other Gulf states have been expelled, or worse.

". . . the release of foreign hostages . . . was one of the 'accidental' results of the Gulf War."

Although the U.S. administration insisted that there was "no linkage" between the Israeli-Palestinian issues and the occupation of Kuwait, President Bush did recognize openly that peace in the region would require a solution to this long-standing problem. Following the war, the Secretary of State embarked on an intensive effort that led to the convening in October 1991 of a Middle East Peace Conference. At this writing, prospects for that peace conference appear to be dim: Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories have grown, leading to Palestinian charges of bad faith; internal Israeli

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After the War—What Now?

(continued from page 3)

opposition to even limited automony for the Palestinians has brought about the collapse of the governing Israeli coalition and the calling of new elections.

Would even this degree of progress have been reached without the Gulf War? This is one of history's imponderables. But, a study of recent history does show that there have been earlier missed opportunities for peace in the Middle East, and never before has a U.S. Secretary of State made the kind of effort Secretary of State Baker has made to bring together the parties to the conflict.

Ironically, one of the unambiguously positive developments in the region, the release of foreign hostages held in Lebanon, was one of the "accidental" results of the Gulf War. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, Iraqi soldiers freed prisoners held in a Kuwaiti jail. Among these prisoners were Lebanese whose release had been demanded by the hostage-taking groups in Lebanon. This unexpected development, along with Iranian and Syrian desires to normalize relations with the West, led to the end of this chapter of Middle East history.

"For many Muslims, the Gulf War represented a replay of the Crusades. . . ."

Religious Extremism

Economic disparities, the squandering of human and material resources on the enhancement of what has turned out to be illusory military power, a continuing sense of powerlessness on the international scene and within their own repressive societies—all of these have been contributing factors to the rise of religious extremism in the region. For many Muslims, the Gulf War represented a replay of the Crusades, an attempt by the western Christian world to humiliate and dominate the Muslim world. Recent elections in Algeria and Jordan, in which there was considerable sympathy for Iraq before and during the war, have resulted in electoral success for "Islamist" parties. It is clear that this feature of the Middle Eastern landscape remains a prominent one in the wake of the desert storm.

Christian Responses

During the the period leading up to the war, churches in the Middle East appealed to churches in the West to resist the rush toward military solutions to political problems. This appeal was based not only on Orthodox Christian theology, which regards the resort to war as a sign of human sinfulness, but also on bitter experience. The Middle East has experienced six major wars, and several smaller ones, during the past 45 years. None of these conflicts has resolved fundamental issues. Indeed, each war has created new problems that are added to the old. The Gulf War, for example, created new groups of refugees and stateless people: Kurds in Iraq, Iran and Turkey; Palestinians expelled from Kuwait and other Gulf states who have no home to which to return. Even Iraq's small Christian community was affected. As many as 50,000 of Iraq's 500,000 Christians fled the country during and after the war. Some 10,000 of them remain in refugee camps in Turkey.

There are now a whole host of new humanitarian problems to which the churches in the region must respond. During the past four decades the churches have devoted considerable resources and energy toward addressing the plight of the Palestinians, particularly those who remain in refugee camps, and that of the Lebanese, who experienced 16 years of civil war punctuated by invasion and occupation by Israel and Syria. Now there is also the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, a country with a destroyed infrastructure, rampant malnutrition particularly among children, and the outbreak of diseases caused by the use of contaminated water. To date, U.S. churches have contributed over $1 million to the Olive Branch, an ecumenical effort to assist the victims of the Gulf War.

The challenge for Christians in the U.S. and in the Middle East is to articulate and to press for the establishment of a new world order that recognizes the reality of interdependence, the need for mutual sharing and an understanding of religion as a force which unifies rather than divides.

Celebrate Environmental Sabbath

Plan now to celebrate Environmental Sabbath, June 7, 1992, or plan to highlight environmental concerns in a service at another time. A packet is available to assist in the planning of worship educational events and advocacy related to the Earth Summit, June 1-12 (see Issue Perspective, pp. 6-7). It includes:

—an introductory guide to the Earth Summit,
—issue briefs,
—liturgical materials,
—a list of UCC delegates to the Earth Summit,
—UCC resolutions on the Earth Summit, and
—an annotated bibliograhy.

The packet is available for $5 from the UCBWM, Global Education and Advocacy Office, 700 Prospect Ave. East, Cleveland, OH 44115. Phone: 216-736-3214.

You may also use the bulletin insert on the following page, which incorporates elements drawn from the resources listed above. The music in the bulletin insert is an original composition by Christopher Grundy, who served as a volunteer at the Asian Rural Institute in Nishinasuno, Japan, 1988-89. The Asian Rural Institute is working hard at teaching rural leaders both appropriate technology and sustainable development practices. The words of the song express a hope for all people of the earth.

This litany comes from "Only One Earth," prepared by the United Nations Environmental Programme, which, in addition to worship resources, includes Earth Facts and suggestions for action to protect the earth and its atmosphere. It is available for $5 from UNEP, Room DC2-803, United Nations, New York, NY 10017.

"101 Ways to Help Save the Earth," with 52 Weeks of congregational activities, including the Environmental Sabbath, is available for $3 from NEER (Network for Environmental and Economic Responsibiity), 12 Terrace Avenue, Nutley, NJ 07110, telephone (201) 667-0079.

A Litany of Gratitude

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We live in all things
All things live in us

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We live by the sun
We move with the stars

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We eat from the earth
We drink from the rain
We breathe from the air

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We share with the creatures
We have strength through their gifts

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We depend on the forests
We have knowledge through their secrets

Reader: We rejoice in all life
People: We have the privilege of seeing and understanding
We have the responsibility of caring
We have the joy of celebrating

ALL: We rejoice in all life

Five of 50 Project Ideas found in the Environmental Sabbath newsletter, from UNEP.
—Set up a recycling program in your office, school, or church.
—Approach your local utility company about offering free energy audits.
—Organize a carpooling program for your workplace.
—Start or join a tree-planting project in your community.
—Organize or get involved with a beach or roadside clean-up.

Fact: More than 150 million more people will get skin cancer in the U.S. alone over the next 80 years if nothing is done to save the ozone layer.
Fact: Nearly 2 billion people have inadequate drinking water, and 3 billion lack proper sanitation.

Environmental Sabbath/Earth Rest Day

The Environmental Sabbath is celebrated every year by faith communities worldwide on the weekend nearest World Environment Day, June 5. This year it is especially timely because the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, known as the Earth Summit, is meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 1 to 12.

The purpose of the Environmental Sabbath is to give thanks for the incredible richness of earth, to be reminded of the fragility of our environment and the damage being done to it daily, and to accept our responsibility as stewards of the earth.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . .
God said, "Let there be light."
God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together God called Seas.
And God saw that it was good.

God called forth vegetation, set the sun and moon in the sky, and they were signs for seasons, and for days and for years.
God created living creatures of every kind.
And God saw that it was good.

God created humans and gave them all that had been created, to use it and to care for it.

And God saw that it was good.

(from Genesis 1)

Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the Earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the Earth, befalls the children of the Earth. If we spit upon the ground we spit upon ourselves. This we know. The Earth does not belong to us; we belong to the Earth . . . One thing we know, which the white man may one day discover, our God is the same God . . . This earth is precious to God, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. So love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it. And with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children and love . . . as God loves us all.

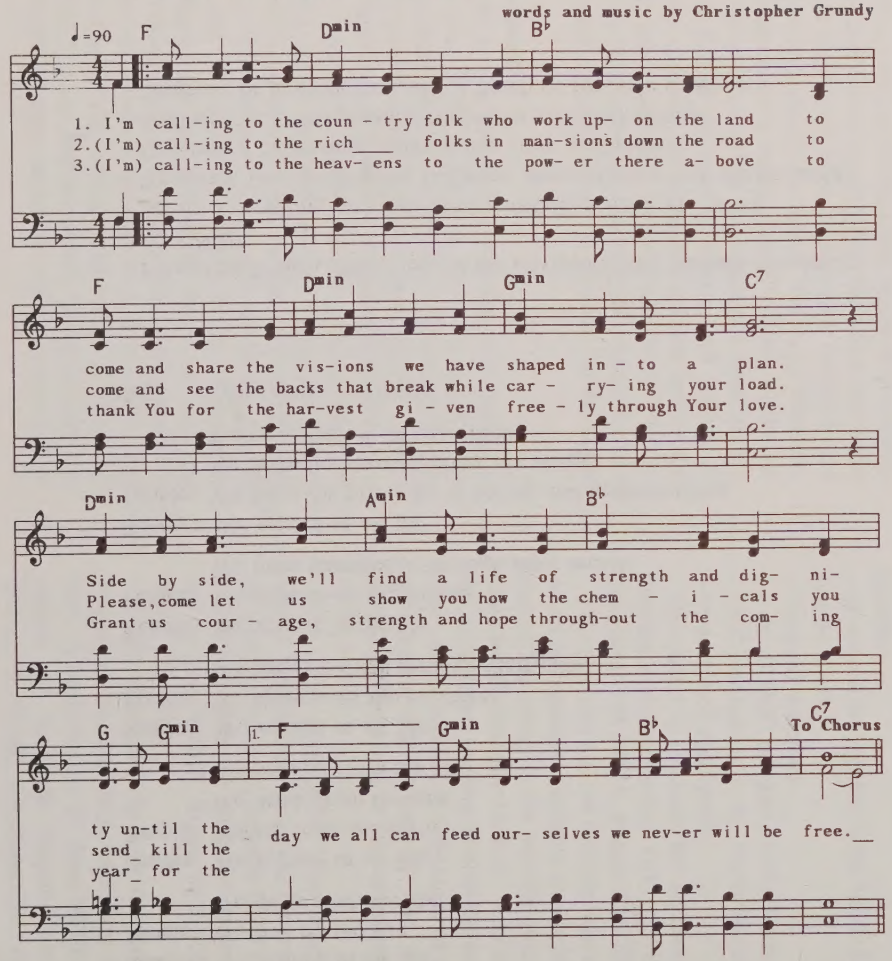
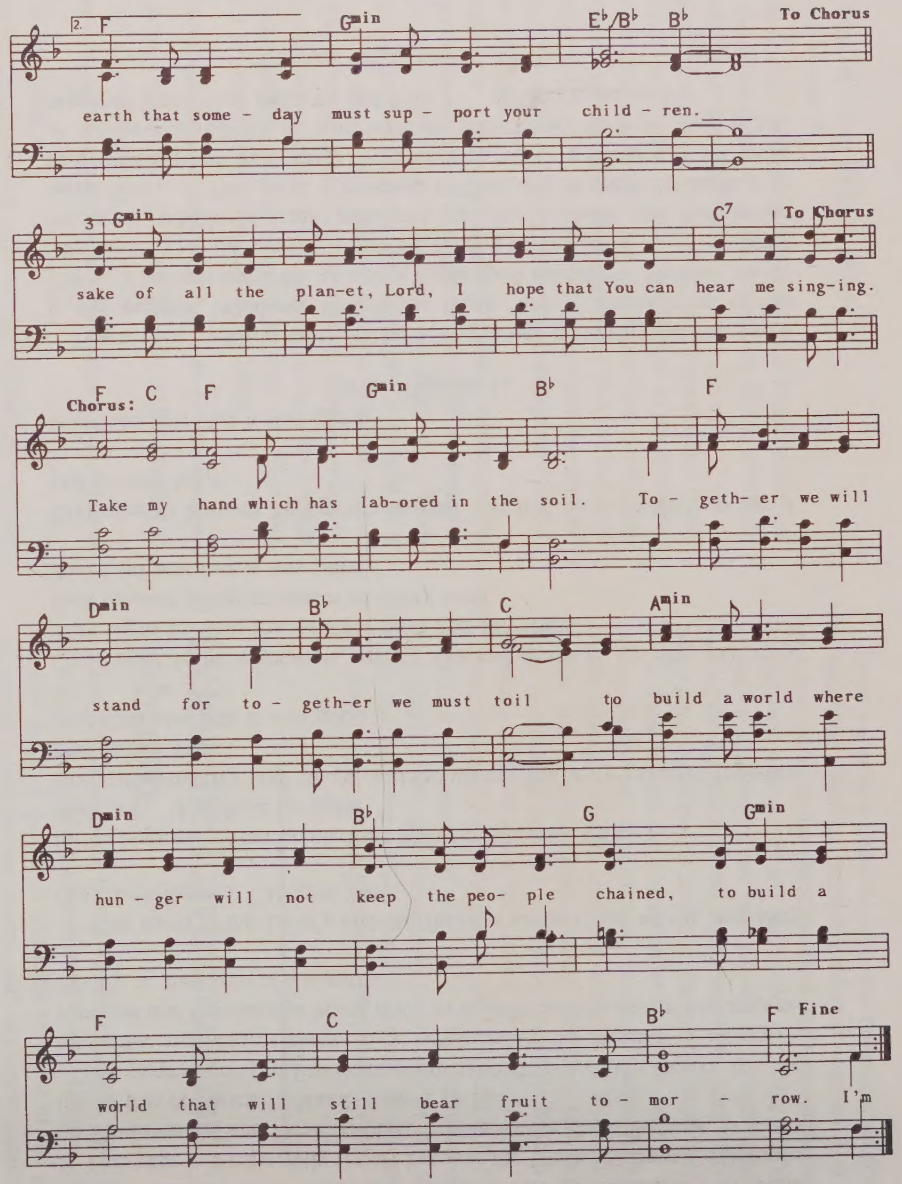
(from Chief Seattle, 1855)

Fact: We are losing rain forests at the rate of one football field a second.
Fact: Two-thirds of the world's 1.8 billion city dwellers breathe air that contains dangerously high levels of sulphur dioxide and dust.

Take My Hand

(A Theme song written for the Asian Rural Institute's Sixteenth Annual Harvest Thanksgiving Celebration, October 8-9, 1988)

words and music by Christopher Grundy


♩=90
1. I'm call-ing to the coun - try folk who work up- on the land to
2.(I'm) call-ing to the rich___ folks in man-sions down the road to
3.(I'm) call-ing to the heav- ens to the pow- er there a- bove to
come and share the vis-ions we have shaped in - to a plan.
come and see the backs that break while car - ry- ing your load.
thank You for the har-vest gi - ven free - ly through Your love.
Side by side, we'll find a life of strength and dig- ni-
Please,come let us show you how the chem - i - cals you
Grant us cour - age, strength and hope through-out the com- ing
ty un-til the
send kill the
year for the
day we all can feed our- selves we nev-er will be free.
To Chorus

2.
earth that some - day must sup - port your child - ren.
To Chorus
3.
sake of all the plan-et, Lord, I hope that You can hear me sing-ing.
To Chorus
Chorus:
Take my hand which has lab-ored in the soil. To - geth- er we will
stand for to - geth-er we must toil to build a world where
hun - ger will not keep the peo- ple chained, to build a
world that will still bear fruit to - mor - row. I'm
Fine

This song belongs to the ARI participants, past and present and to anyone willing to join in their work for a world in which countries can sustain themselves without destroying the earth. The Asian Rural Institute in Nishinasuno, Japan, seeks to nurture and train rural community leaders to facilitate the sustainable self-development of third-world people.

How We See It From Here

***Judy and Allen Myrick** are working with the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, Zimbabwe Synod, in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Allen does pastoral work and directs lay training programs. Judy teaches English and works with the church. They recently shared this story of a lay pastor in their Synod.*

In 1991 Jonathan Dube became a lay pastor in the Zimbabwe Synod, United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. Mr. Dube is a peasant farmer of limited education, but he has a keen mind and an eagerness to serve the church. When he heard of the new program to train lay pastors, he promptly spoke with his minister about entering the program. He finished his studies in record time—two years instead of the usual three. Then he was commissioned as a lay pastor and licensed to give the sacraments.

Mr. Dube serves five small congregations in a very remote area, 60 miles from the main church of the Hope Fountain circuit, where the minister resides. They are on very bad dirt roads, in a drought-prone area where few people can earn a living from the land. Most of the people in his congregations are women, children or the very elderly. He visits them on his bicycle, some days riding 30 or 40 miles over corrugated roads and rough paths.

Mr. Dube's efforts are making a difference in those isolated congregations. He is helping the Sunday Schools function more effectively, and guiding those who teach the confirmation classes. He is encouraging lay preachers to enroll in the correspondence course offered by the Synod. He is meeting with groups that want to start small development projects like raising chickens or building a dam for irrigation. And when he comes to Synod meetings, he speaks with a greater authority, arising from his service in these congregations.

***Bob Molsberry,** a missionary with the Common Ministry in Latin America and the Caribbean of the UCBWM and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is working with the Mennonite Central Committee in Managua, Nicaragua. He wrote this analysis of the situation there in October 1991.*

It used to be easy for North American peace and justice activists to understand Nicaragua. You had your bad guys—the U. S. administration-funded "contra" terrorists, strangling the Nicaraguan economy, and generally making life difficult for the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan people. And then you had your good guys—the FSLN (Sandinista Liberation Front) which had overthrown 50 years of Somoza family tyranny and which was recognized by the World Health Organization for its efforts in extending health care, education and social services to the poor.

"Kids carry their own chairs because the government no longer provides them."

Before the 1990 elections, the Sandinistas seemed a shoe-in. But they lost. The people of Nicaragua were tired of war and a deteriorating economy. By their vote, they were crying "Uncle!" "Uncle Sam," actually. There was no secret about the fact that Nicaragua's future hinged on winning Washington's favor by voting for the U.S.-backed candidate, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro. Washington had agreed in advance to disband its mercenary army, the "contras," and free up big bucks in aid to Nicaragua if Chamorro won.

She (or rather, the U.S. State Department) did manage to bring the war to a close. But in exchange for peace the Nicaraguan people are saddled with an economic austerity program which has increased unemployment to 50 percent, raised prices on basic foodstuffs, cut the minimum wage to $50 per month (while the U.N. estimates that a family needs at least $125 to survive) and slashed social services. Kids carry their own chairs to school, for example, because the government no longer provides them. Some hospitals have lost up to half their staff.

But behind these broad strokes, something very interesting is happening, something the U.S. media is either missing or ignoring. A fragile center is emerging in Nicaraguan politics, made up of the President and her ministers in alliance with none other than the former Sandinista leadership. Yes. The Sandinistas are playing a constructive role in holding the center together. They are smart enough to realize that the alternative would be civil war. And Chamorro, to her credit, is recognizing the gains made by the poor over the last decade and the power of the Sandinista party to defend them.

"The wild card is the re-arming of the former 'contras' in the countryside."

Pragmatically, the President is moving very slowly and carefully to push the privatization demanded by the ideologues within the U.S. State Department and the conservative "Miami Boys" who helped her win the election. Too slowly, in fact, for these extreme right-wing elements. They are ready to dump her.

But if they had their way, people like Virgilio Godoy, the Vice President; Alfredo Cesar, the head of the legislature; and the Mayor of Managua, Arnoldo Aleman, with their winner-take-all mentalities, would evict the peasants from their cooperatives, give back the businesses to Nicaraguans who have been lounging in Miami for the last 10 years, and paint over the revolutionary murals found on downtown walls. Well over a million people would be affected by their sweeping "reforms." They seem to want to forget that the revolution ever happened.

Even though the official policies now in place are undermining the poor, both the still-influential Sandinistas and the President herself are committed to seeing that they don't go too far or too fast. So far, due in large part to their sensible and pragmatic negotiations, Nicaragua has avoided civil war.

The wild card in all this is the re-arming of the former "contras" in the countryside. As many as 1,000 men are roaming around shooting up trucks and little kids and Sandinista cooperatives. Although they do have some legitimate

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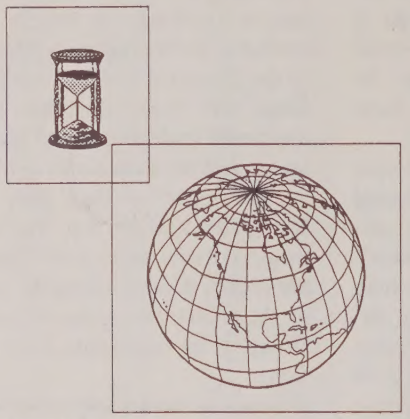
Issue Perspective: Environment,



The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 1 to 12, 1992. This meeting of governments is commonly referred to as the "Earth Summit." Heads of state and government delegations will gather to debate carefully worded and sensitively negotiated agreements on such technical issues as global warming, forests and biodiversity. Non-governmental organizations plan parallel events in Brazil to monitor UNCED and offer alternative comment and vision.

UNCED is more than just a meeting. It has become an historic opportunity for ordinary people around the world to speak out and influence the international agenda. The church, as one sector of the global community, participates in the debate within the UNCED process. The UNCED process challenges churches to commit themselves to respond to development and environmental issues from a faith perspective. This means learning about the issues, discussing them, engaging one another in theological reflection and taking action.

The United Church of Christ has an ongoing commitment to issues of economic and environmental justice. That commitment is articulated in the denomination-wide priority on "Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace." The priority enlists all parts of the church in "addressing in their interrelatedness the issues of economic, racial and social justice, an end to war, hunger, poverty and economic exploitation, and creating a sustainable environment that balances full and equal human development with the protection of the ecosystem." In addition, General Synod 18 adopted a resolution in "Support of the United Nations Conference on Environment & Development."

The *Earth Charter* is a key entry point for the United Church of Christ and all people of faith in the UNCED process. The *Earth Charter* will provide the moral and ethical framework for the other more technical conventions of the UNCED. It is to be short and concisely worded. The hope is that the *Charter* will help shift the focus of UNCED from a technical debate to a moral and ethical conversation between nations.

The *Earth Charter* is still being drafted. It is not yet clear whether it will take the form of a visionary statement or an articulation of principles, or both. Some prefer that it be a charter of rights which can be used, as is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to call nations to mutual ethical and moral accountability in relation to environment and development issues. Over 160 nations have expressed support for an *Earth Charter*. The U.S. government, to date, has resisted its formulation.

Governments and citizens groups are submitting drafts of the *Earth Charter* to the United Nations. In August 1991, 50 leaders of religious groups from around the world gathered in Switzerland to discuss the *Charter* from an interfaith perspective. The United Church of Christ was represented at this meeting by the Rev. Albert Cohen of Pasadena, California. The discussion resulted in "One Earth Community," a visionary statement and articulation of principles. "One Earth Community" and the various other drafts will be negotiated into a final version in March 1992 as part of the fourth and final Preparatory Committee meeting of UNCED at UN Headquarters in New York.

Upon its completion, the *Earth Charter* will be available from The United Church Board for World Ministries. UCC members are encouraged to read, discuss and reflect upon the *Charter*. Upon study, those who choose to publicly affirm the moral and ethical priniciples contained within the *Charter* are encouraged to sign it and return a tear-off portion.

The UCC delegation of 35 people journeying to Brazil for UNCED will carry with it an offering of signed commitments to the *Charter*. The intent is to present this offering to President Bush or to Ambassador Ryan, who is heading the offical U.S. delegation.

"UNCED will fail if the U.S. fails to honor an Earth Charter and to recognize it."

Unquestionably, the United States is the single most important actor in UNCED negotiations. UNCED will fail if the U.S. fails to honor an *Earth Charter* and to recognize it. Increased cooperation between developed and developing countries is necessary if humankind is to address the challenges of climate change, ozone depletion, deforestation, loss of biological diversity, depletion of freshwater supplies, marine pollution and the accompanying unbalanced and inequitable development.

To date, the U.S. government has not adopted cooperative policies in the substantive negotiations preceding UNCED. In fact, the U.S. has refused: 1) to negotiate on targets and timetables for reducing greenhouse gas emissions; 2) to commit new and additional funds for any programs for environmental conservation or sustainable development; 3) to support the creation of any new institutions for international cooperation on environment and development; and 4) to accept any new binding commitments to make U.S. management of natural resources more sustainable. It opposed linking the reduction of developing country debt burdens with sustainable development policies. It was the only highly industrialized state to block an agreement to strengthen the Basel Convention on international trade in hazardous wastes.

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Development and the Church

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Sense of Congress resolutions calling for constructive U.S. policy on key UNCED issues have been introduced in the Senate by Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) and in the House by Reps. Dante Fascell (Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, D-FL), Robert Torricelli (Chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, D-NJ) and Gus Yatron (Chair of the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, D-PA). Both resolutions on U.S. policy toward UNCED call on the United States:

- to negotiate to reduce the threat of climate change;
- to support principles on the conserving and managing of the world's forests;
- to contribute to financing agreed-upon UNCED actions;
- to support consultations on debt reduction in order to conserve natural resources; and
- to support development of a timetable for industrialized nations and the United Nations system to reform their national accounts to reflect full environmental and social costs.

All of these are important points which warrant serious consideration.

Visits or letters to Senators and Representatives are timely to voice support for the UNCED resolutions.

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

As UNCED draws closer, many UCC congregations will plan and host special events. A new resource packet on environment and development is available from the UCBWM's Office for Global Education & Advocacy, 700 Prospect Avenue East, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100, or (216) 736-3214 at a cost of $5.00. In addition to the *Earth Charter*, the resource packet will contain worship aids, action ideas, issue briefs, "A Guide to UNCED," the text of the General Synod 18 resolution and the names and addresses of UCC delegates to UNCED who are available to give presentations.

Pray for the success of UNCED. May UNCED provide an opportunity for the world community to embrace life and to begin to develop economic, social and environmental relationships which honor the whole earth.

OGHS Works in Vietnam and Cambodia

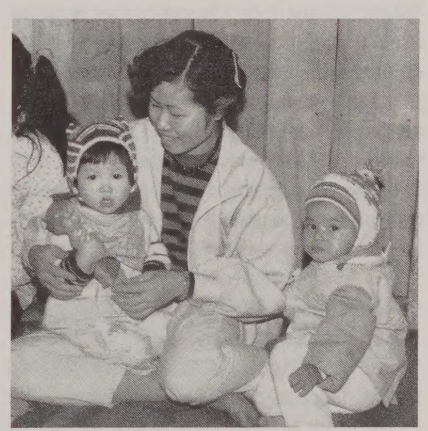
"If one needs convincing that money given to One Great Hour of Sharing really makes a difference to people who need help, they should visit Vietnam and Cambodia and see those OGHS dollars at work." So reports UCBWM staff member the Rev. Lloyd Van Vactor who was a member of a Church World Service delegation visiting those countries in January.

Mr. Van Vactor visited Vietnam and Cambodia six years ago as a member of another CWS delegation. He was greatly impressed with the changes that have occurred in the two countries in the intervening years. "It was like being in a different country," he observed. Because of changing political and economic policies in Vietnam, significant improvement in the conditions of the country and people is evident, though there are many serious problems yet confronting Vietnam, Van Vactor reported.

The economic blockade imposed on Vietnam by the United States government is the major stumbling block to real economic development in the country. This blockade, while keeping international agency funding as well as U.S. funds from entering the country, is not stopping private capital from many Asian and some European countries from entering. Soon it may be too late for American private investors to have a place there. "If only out of self-interest, the United States should lift the blockade against Vietnam. It was lifted for Cambodia in January, why not for Vietnam?" Van Vactor asks.

Church World Service has been at work in Vietnam almost continuously since 1954, assisting in medical, veterinary medicine, agriculture and educational programs. The exciting change that has occurred over the past six years in CWS-supported programs in Vietnam and Cambodia is a shift from support of institutionally based programs in urban areas to programs in remote rural areas.

The recent delegation traveled by car, boat and on foot to reach isolated rural clinics, schools and child care centers assisted by CWS. Support has included medical equipment for clinics, food, blankets, mosquito nets and other supplies for the schools and child care centers. Several rural communities, with assistance from the provincial governments, constructed new clinic facilities when they learned their clinic would receive medical equipment from Church World Service.



Rural child care center in Vietnam.

In Cambodia, Church World Service supports staff in two provincial centers who work in their respective districts with people from the provincial government's veterinary medicine department. The primary emphasis is on livestock vaccination. Saving the life of a rural family's work animal is one of the most basic types of support possible. Church World Service also assisted with the establishment of a vegetable seed production center. Now under the Department of Agronomy, the center still receives support in personnel and limited funds. The availability of locally adapted and inexpensive vegetable seeds is a significant boost for the income of a small, rural farmer in Cambodia.

CHURCHES AID FORMER SOVIET UNION

For many months reports from Russia and the other republics which once constituted the Soviet Union have brought news of a rapidly deteriorating economy, to the extent that the capacity to meet even the basic subsistence needs of the population is in question. At the same time, awareness has grown of the new freedom of the churches to become involved in dealing with the problems of society.

Even as the failure of the Soviet communist state became ever more evident, it did not prove possible for the churches there to utilize the newly available opportunities as rapidly as might have been wished. Churches have been eager to move into new social service ministries, but they continue to be overwhelmed by a multitude of problems resulting from the new situation, combined with a lack of resources and personnel to address them.

Reacting to reports of food and other shortages in the winter of 1990-91, the World Council of Churches (as is usual in response to natural disasters and other emergencies anywhere) launched a USSR Hunger Appeal, summoning support for an ecumenical relief effort. The program worked through local parishes and was focused on offering food supplements to the most vulnerable groups—the elderly, large families and the disabled.

As winter approached and the economic situation became worse rather than better, the appeal was expanded and enlarged. Major food shipments arrived during December 1991 and January 1992 in Moscow and St. Petersburg for distribution through church channels there and elsewhere.

Food shipments, while urgently important, will not solve Russia's problems. Nor do they by any means exhaust the ways in which the churches can be of assistance in this critical time. For example, the participation of Russian churches in ministries in hospitals, rehabilitation programs and other social services suddenly became welcome and was urgently requested. But seven decades of being totally forbidden from such involvement meant that the churches were lacking in the expertise and experience needed for these ministries. In one important initiative, a delegation of church leaders in health and human service ministries (primarily UCC) visited Russia in October 1991 to share information and explore what learnings from U.S. churches' experience might benefit the new undertakings in Russia in the field of church diaconal work. The trip was organized by US-USSR (now East-West) Bridges for Peace, in conjunction with the UCC Council on Health and Human Service Ministries. The visit was hosted by the recently formed Department on Church Charity and Social Service of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Girls at children's home in Russia.

Two Representatives of that office were scheduled to visit the U.S. in March 1992 to attend the concurrent annual meetings of the Protestant Health and Human Services Assembly and the UCC Council on Health and Human Service Ministries. At that time, the formation of a Consortium for Technical Assistance to Russian Health and Human Services Administration will be announced. The Bridges for Peace office will operate the Consortium to organize the transfer of administrative "know-how" between persons operating health and human services ministries in North America and their counterparts in the emerging nations of the former USSR.

In another major effort, the National Council of Churches (USA) Europe Office, building on its active cooperative relationships of many years with the churches of the Soviet Union, convened a conference in February 1992 with representatives from the Russian churches, attempting to define further possible forms of cooperation.

Foreign Policy Without Communism

by Andrea Young
OCIS/UCBWM Foreign Policy Advocate

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the changes in eastern Europe present an extraordinary opportunity for the religious community to present a new global vision. Since the end of World War II, the need to contain and defeat communism has been the organizing principle of U.S. foreign and military policy. That principle is no longer relevant to the circumstances in today's world. Yet, a great deal is invested in structures and policy frameworks that address the now nonexistent Cold War.

While lacking many direct conflicts between the Soviet Union and the United States, the Cold War was played out in hot conflicts throughout the developing world. Low-intensity conflict emerged as a strategy after the disaster of Vietnam. U.S. military and security-related assistance supported wars in the Philippines, El Salvador, Afghanistan, Angola and Nicaragua. In many other countries, fear of communism became the justification for supporting repressive, autocratic regimes. Zaire, South Korea and Guatemala are examples.

At home, the Cold War resulted in trillions of dollars in military spending and corresponding budget deficits. The rationale for this spending no longer exists, yet thousands of U.S. jobs in the military and in civilian military industries depend on military spending. The Cold War has also undermined civil liberties and domestic politics. The Civil Rights Movement is but one example of how fear of communism was used in an attempt to destroy a movement for social change. The charge of communism was used by President Nixon when he vetoed a child care bill in the 1970's. It has also been used to reverse the gains of the labor movement and to reverse efforts to reduce poverty.

If fear of communism has been effective in distracting moderate-income Americans from their own needs, we can imagine how effective it has been in preventing the U.S. from responding to the legitimate cries for justice from the poor of the developing world.

The end of the Cold War must not result in turning away from the millions of

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Foreign Policy Without Communism

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people harmed and neglected throughout its duration. The reconstruction needs of countries like Ethiopia, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador and Nicaragua are enormous. Having used these nations as pawns in the Cold War, the U.S. has an obligation to aid in their reconstruction after scheduled democratic elections take place. Emerging democracies of the Third World like Namibia, and soon South Africa and Zambia, among others, need development assistance if democracy is to produce material benefits for the people.

"The peace dividend must not be reserved for U.S. citizens only."

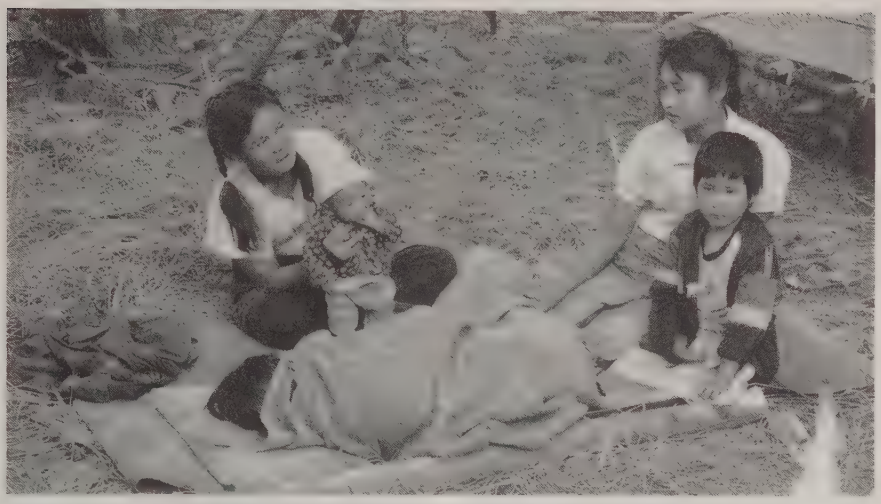
Relationships must be cultivated and efforts made to ensure that India's democracy continues and that Nigeria's move back to democracy will be successful. The virtues of good relations with nations have been judged by their value in the Cold War context, while common interests and strong economic ties have been discounted.

Economic and development issues will now take precedence on the world stage. Japan has expressed interest in funding major infrastructure projects in the Third World. So far, the Bush Administration has ignored these overtures. This U.S. Administration has articulated no vision of a world where resources can be directed to the things that make for long-lasting peace.

Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace envisions an integrated world, where the value of one person is equal to the value of any other. The peace dividend must not be reserved for U.S. citizens only. Many of our brothers and sisters in the Third World bore the brunt of the Cold War. And, surely, their need is greater than all but the poorest among us.

Among the many issues to be addressed in the aftermath of the Cold War are the unfair terms of trade between the poor countries and the rich countries, the crippling burden of debt on the developing countries, the sale of arms to the Third World, U.S. covert activities, sustainable development, the rights of women and the global environment. Our vision of the Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace must guide our work and advocacy as our nation sorts out the tasks ahead.

CWS Assists Refugees from Burma



Karen refugees at makeshift shelter in Thailand.

Church World Service, through the Church of Christ in Thailand, supports the Burma Border Coalition in its work with the Karen Refugee Committee. They are providing emergency food, clothing, blankets, medicine and mosquito nets to the thousands of refugees fleeing the Burmese military.

Nearly 100,000 refugees have sought refuge along the Moei River separating Thailand and Burma. Members of several ethnic minority groups, predominantly Karens, in northeast Burma, have been targets of concerted military efforts by the ruling military junta in Burma for several years. Thousands have fled to avoid the fighting and possible conscription as slave porters for Burmese soldiers.

The government of Thailand allows the refugees to cross into Thailand for humanitarian reasons. Thailand, however, has refused to allow them to come under the care of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees because of political relations with Burma. The only assistance provided the refugees comes through voluntary agencies permitted by Thai officials to work in the area.

Current fighting can be dated to September 1988, when General Saw Maung led a military coup shooting thousands in the streets. The leaders, in what they soon realized to be a miscalculation, called for an election and promised to abide by the results. The military-backed National Unity Party won only 10 of 485 seats up for election. At first the junta admitted defeat, but then reneged on their promise to transfer power. No negotiations have taken place with the elected representatives, and many leaders and dozens of party representatives and supporters have been arrested. By the end of 1991 over 100 of the elected representatives had been imprisoned, died or had disappeared.

In January 1992, a Church World Service delegation, including UCBWM staff member Lloyd Van Vactor, visited the refugee area. During their visit to the war-torn area, the delegation met briefly with Bo Mya, the president of the Karen National Union. He told of churches being burned and pastors killed in the recent attacks in the Delta region. He pleaded with the delegation to make known the plight of those in Burma who are suffering at the hands of the military.

American Delegation Visits Vietnam and Cambodia

A communion service in the Protestant church in Hanoi on the first Sunday of the New Year and an evening mass at a large Roman Catholic church in Ho Chi Minh City gave a North American delegation an opportunity to experience the church in Vietnam and to meet local church leaders. The delegation included UCBWM staff member the Rev. Lloyd Van Vactor. While the primary purpose of the visit to Vietnam and Cambodia in January was to visit Church World Service-related programs in the two countries, the delegation took advantage of opportunities to meet Christian leaders there.

In Hanoi they visited with the pastor of the Protestant church and several teachers

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New Sudan Council Meets

"Be not afraid to die." This was one of the primary attributes expressed when the Executive Committee of the newly formed New Sudan Council of Churches began to look for an Executive Secretary last year. The other attributes were a willingness to serve people and a love of the church.

An invitation was extended to the Rev. Roger Schrock, then the Executive of the World Ministries Commission of the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Illinois. Roger and his wife Carolyn had formerly worked in Sudan and were well known by several members of the Executive Committee. When informed of the invitation and the desired attributes, Schrock responded, "I can buy one and two. Number three is a little tougher, though I realized what the committee was saying was not 'wants to die,' but 'not be afraid to die.' " He added, "Our friends live on the edge and they invite us to live there too."

The Schrocks went to Sudan in September 1991, Roger as the Executive Secretary and Carolyn as the Communications/Interpretation Coordinator for the Council. The Schrocks are jointly supported by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Church of the Brethren and the Reformed Church in America.

In April delegates from all the Christian churches in southern Sudan will gather for the second annual meeting of the New Sudan Council of Churches. The meeting will be held in the context of continuing war in many parts of southern Sudan and the resulting flow of refugees and extremely difficult economic conditions.

The NSCC was created in 1990 by the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches in southern Sudan in response to the crisis situation in which they ministered. Civil war has raged for many years in Sudan as the fundamentalist Islamic government based in Khartoum seeks to impose Islamic law on the predominantly Christian and animistic south. Taking up the cause for the southerners is the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M).

The churches in the SPLA/M-controlled areas of Sudan were isolated. Because of the fighting they were cut off from each other and from the Christians in government-controlled areas. In spite of their isolation, the churches continued to minister to the people and to grow in number. In 1989 Bishop Nathaniel Garang of the Bor Diocese of the Episcopal Church in Sudan and Bishop Paride Taban of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Torit met. They found a mutual need for more unity among the churches ministering in the troubled area. In consultation with other church leaders in the south, as well as with officials of the Sudan Council of Churches based in Khartoum, the decision was made to establish the New Sudan Council of Churches.

Episcopal Bishop Seme Solomona (left) and Roman Catholic Bishop Parido Taban, chairperson, Executive Committee, New Sudan Council of Churches (right)

The first General Assembly of the Council was held in April 1991, in Torit. It had been more than seven years since these church leaders had been able to meet together and there was great celebration over the re-establishment of fellowship among them. (One lay delegate from the Orthodox Church had walked for more than two months to attend that first assembly!)

The Council's motto is "Serving All God's People." Training clergy and lay leaders is the Council's first priority, since churches are growing very rapidly throughout the area and there is no formal theological institution currently open in the south. Prospective priests and pastors must be sent abroad for formal study. This is both expensive and time-consuming, so efforts are going into local short-term and in-service training programs.

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SUPPLIES SENT TO NEW SUDAN COUNCIL

Donated medicines, health kits, school kits, baby blankets and layettes, hardware items and books were part of a shipment from the United Church Board for World Ministries to the New Sudan Council of Churches just before Christmas. The shipment was made possible by contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing and the CWS Blanket Fund, as well as designated gifts.

Late last year when visiting colleagues in the New Sudan Council of Churches in southern Sudan, UCBWM staff member Lloyd Van Vactor inquired how the UCBWM could be most helpful to the fledgling Council. Because of the critical economic conditions caused by the civil war currently raging in the southern region of Sudan, there is only a barter economy. No cash circulates. Even Council staff members are paid in kind. A gallon of cooking oil, two-thirds of a sack of corn, a little salt and occasionally some used clothing, blankets or a mosquito net are the monthly wages of NSCC staff. A variety of items were suggested to meet some of the needs of nearly 100,000 refugees from the war zones, as well as to enable barter by the Council.

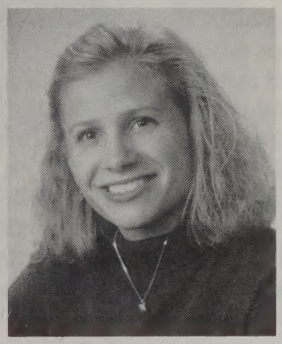
Mr. Van Vactor contacted staff of Church World Service's Material Resource Program. Arrangements were made to secure donations from the CWS stock of available supplies. The shipment included 4,500 baby blankets, 2,475 school kits, 4,745 health kits and 1,250 layettes.

In addition to the CWS supplies, $104,736 worth of donated medicines were secured from InterChurch Medical Assistance. Hundreds of bars of soap, flashlight batteries, hardware items and carpentry tools totalling nearly $10,000 were purchased and included in the container. Several hundred books were secured from the Presbyterian Readers' Service, and several sets of the *Interpreter's Bible* and *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary* were purchased for the Council's leadership development program. The container in which the goods were shipped was also purchased and will remain at the headquarters of the Council in Torit, Sudan, as a secure storage room.

CHRONICLE

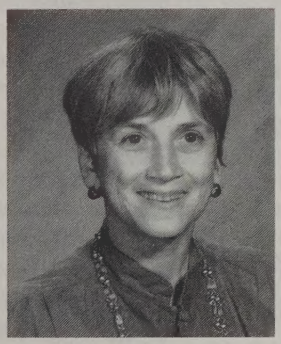
APPOINTMENTS

Argentina



Holly Stovall, Common Ministry Appointment, two years, beginning Jan. 1, 1992, while she serves as a Global Mission Intern with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Argentina. Home church: First Christian Church, Macomb, IL.

Japan



Janice M. Lox, Individual, three years beginning Jan. 1, 1992, to teach English in the High School Division of Kobe College, Nishinomiya. Home church: Crete United Methodist Church, Crete, IL.

Christine Misa Sugiura, Individual, three years and three months, beginning Jan. 1, 1992, while she serves as an English teacher in the High School Division of Kobe College, Nishinomiya. Home church: First Presbyterian Church of Evanston, Evanston, IL.

South Africa

Linda A. Noonan, Individual, three years beginning Feb. 1, 1992, to serve as chaplain at Inanda Seminary, Durban. Home church: University Church, Chicago, IL.

Turkey

Roger and Susan Sherman, Associates, 19 months beginning Feb. 1, 1992, while they serve as teachers at the Uskudar Amerikan Kiz Lisesi in Istanbul. Roger will teach physical education and biology, and Susan will teach physical education. Home church: Amherst Congregational UCC, Amherst, OH.

Zimbabwe

Philip N. Person, Theological Fellow, six months beginning Feb. 1, 1992, while he studies at the United Theological College, Harare. Home church: First Congregational Church, San Francisco, CA.

REAPPOINTMENTS

Ecuador

Elvira L. Arndt, International Associate, three years beginning Dec. 1, 1991, while she serves with the United Evangelical Church of Ecuador doing pastoral ministry and community development projects in Ascazubi and Pastocalle. Home church: Congregational Evangelical Church, Entre Rios, Argentina.

Honduras

Dr. Joyce A. Baker, Individual, three years beginning Jan. 1, 1992, to serve as coordinator of the Medical Social Department and Director of Pinalejo Medical Program, Pinalejo. Home church: Bethel Congregational Church, Defiance, OH.

Mexico

John E. Huegel, Common Ministry Appointment, one year beginning April 1, 1992, while he serves as coordinator of the Theological Education Program of the Association of Evangelical Christian Churches of Mexico, based in San Luis Potosi. Home church: Heights Christian Church, Houston, TX.

Nepal

Nancy Molin, Individual, three years beginning Jan. 15, 1992, to work in non-formal education in cooperation with the United Mission to Nepal. Home church: First Congregational Church, Reno, NV.

South Africa

Judith C. and P. Allen Myrick, Individual, three years beginning Jan. 1, 1992, while she teaches English and he serves as Director of Training for Ministries in Bulawayo. Home church: Kent UCC, Kent, OH.

Turkey

Charles H. Brown, Individual, three years beginning Feb. 1, 1992, to work as an editor at the Redhouse Press, Istanbul. Home church: First Centenary United Methodist Church, Chattanooga, TN.

Alison J. Stendahl, Individual, five years beginning Aug. 1, 1991, while she teaches at Uskudar Amerikan Lisesi and works on program development in Christian-Muslim relations, in collaboration with the Near East Mission and Turkish colleagues. Home church: University Congregational, Seattle, WA.

RETURN TO FIELD

Padmasani Gallup, India, as of Jan. 1, 1992, after a home assignment of four months.

Audrey N. Gilg, Japan, as of Oct. 1, 1991, after home assignment of two months.

HOME ASSIGNMENT

Martha R. and Nathan L. Knoll, Thailand, 10 months, beginning September 1991.

Haru S. and James E. Landes, Japan, three months, beginning July 1, 1992.

Alan R. and Sally A. McCain, Turkey, six months starting April 1, 1992.

David N. and Joyce L. Murchie, Japan, 12 months beginning Aug. 1, 1992.

John M. Rasche, Japan, three months, beginning July 1, 1992.

Charles O. and Dong S. Yoo, six months starting Sept. 1, 1992.

COMPLETION OF TERM

Elaine L. and Gene E. Miller, Jamaica, Volunteers, as of Nov. 30, 1991.

Sharon M. Prestemon, Philippines, Peace and Justice Intern, as of Nov. 30, 1991.

Genet C. Soule, Germany, Associate, as of Sept. 30, 1991.

RETIREMENT

Janell J. Landis, Japan, as of Dec. 31, 1991.

Lou Ann Parsons, South Africa, as of Nov. 30, 1991.

TERMINAL LEAVE

Dalton Said, Costa Rica, for two months beginning Jan. 31, 1992.

LOSSES TO THE FAMILY

The Rev. Dr. Allen L. Irwin, who served in Japan from 1961 to 1974, died Nov. 10, 1991, at the age of 82. He and his wife Marie, who died in 1986, served in the Sendai area where he taught religion and English courses at Miyagi and North Japan Colleges.

Joyce B. Miller, who taught church school at Mt. Selinda in what is now Zimbabwe, Africa, died Sept. 4, 1991. She was 91. Mrs. Miller did her missionary work after she retired from teaching in Ohio. She and her husband, who died in 1989, traveled in Europe, Asia and South America, and sometimes taught.

Gertrude Rinden, who served in China and Japan from 1926 to 1951, died Feb. 29, 1992, at the age of 90, in Dover, New Hampshire. She served with her husband Arthur in Foochow, Kuliang, Ingtai, Diongloh, Nanking and Shanghai. In Nanking, she taught English at the university; in Japan, she taught English at Kobe College in Nishinomiya.

She is survived by a son Paul, of Concord, NH, and daughters Margaret Kanost, Lake Orion, MI, and Edith Holley, Brooklyn, NY.

Louise Vordenberg, who served 38 years in Honduras, died Dec. 31, 1991, at Riverview Community, Cincinnati, at the age of 95. She had been identified with the Honduras Mission almost through its entire history.

Her mission work began in 1924, with the Evangelical and Reformed Board of International Missions. She served in Honduras in many capacities until 1961. Miss Vordenberg was deeply identified with the church there.

Miss Vordenberg was involved in social work in banana camps, cared for the Bethany Boarding Home for Girls, and assisted with the literacy program in the villages. She was named an emeritus missionary in 1961. Upon retirement she settled in her home town of Cincinnati.

She is survived by a sister, Ruth G. Russell, a brother, Herman Vordenberg, of Tulsa, OK, and a nephew, Richard Vordenberg, of Mason, OH.

New Sudan Council of Churches

(continued from page 12)

Job skill training for church members is also a priority, along with relief and development efforts. In March, 1992, a group of volunteer builders from the Church of the Brethren responded to an invitation from the NSCC to come for a three-month period. While in Sudan the volunteers will train a group of Sudanese as builders to prepare them for massive reconstruction and building efforts needed throughout southern Sudan.

Currently Council leaders are engaged in reconciliation efforts seeking to bring peace among factions of the SPLA/M who have been fighting each other. The first phase of the negotiations resulted in a cease-fire between the rival factions last November. Negotiations toward a permanent solution to the conflict are led by NSCC leaders and representatives of several peace groups in Nairobi, Kenya.

The UCBWM has sent a grant to assist the NSCC in these reconciliation efforts.

After 500 Years— A Call for Proposals

Grants for up to $500 are being made available to facilitate the development of local, state/Conference, and regional events designed:

—to educate people about the genocidal effects of the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas,

—to call them to repentance, and

—to celebrate 500 years of resistance on the part of indigenous peoples and other people of color.

The offices of Racial and Ethnic Minority Constituency Development and Recruitment and of Global Education and Advocacy of the United Church Board for World Ministries are cooperating in this effort along with the offices of Ministries to Special Groups and Racial Justice of the American Missionary Association of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the Office for Church in Society, and the Commission for Racial Justice. For details, call (216) 736-3280.

GIFTS RECEIVED IN MEMORY OF

Everett A. Babcock
Hannah C. Babcock

Everett C. Blake
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New Videos Enhance Study of World Ministries

Presence and Proclamation

The United Church Board for World Ministries has just released a new video curriculum for exploring the meaning of world ministries in today's world. **"Presence and Proclamation: Portraits of God's Mission Around the World"** begins with a nine-minute overview of the work of the UCBWM. This introduction is followed by six shorter segments designed for flexibile use in a variety of settings. Stories about the people and programs around the world provide a touchstone from which biblical, theological and ethical issues can be considered.

Featured programs include Barbara de Souza, a missionary in Brazil engaged in a ministry of empowerment and health care; missionaries to the United States in Minnesota; a ministry to the Japanese immigrant community in Los Angeles; a workcamp in Micronesia; a partnership consultation held in Africa; and exploration of local/global connections for the local church.

A 40-page curriculum for use with the video segments includes reflections on relevant scriptural passages, discussion starters, a session plan and optional activities for further study and involvement.

A copy of "Presence and Proclamation" is available in each Conference Resource Center. It is available for sale from United Church Resources for $39.95 plus shipping and handling.

Making the Connection

A workcamp experience in the Pacific Islands is documented in another UCBWM video release, **"Making the Connection."** The video tells the story of a group of high school students who traveled to Micronesia last summer to participate in a workcamp. The group of 13 high school students and eight adult advisors learned new meanings of the terms love, hospitality and generosity from people who have suffered from the effects of the United States' testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific.

This dynamic 20-minute color video is designed to inspire young adults to explore the world of the overseas mission arm of the United Church of Christ. It is available from United Church Resources for $19.95 plus shipping and handling.

In Search of Reconciliation

"In Search of Reconciliation," an eight-part study of the issues in the Middle East, has just been re-released by the UCBWM. Like the earlier version produced in 1986, the new version of the study features interviews with people intimately involved in the region.

Dr. Dale Bishop, Regional Secretary for the Middle East for the United Church of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the National Council of Churches, interviews Gabriel Habib on the future of Lebanon, and Hunter College's Nubar Hovsepian on the aftermath of the Gulf War, and others.

The study uses maps, background readings and group discussion in addition to thought-provoking video to introduce people to the political and religious issues of the area.

"In Search of Reconciliation" is available from United Church Resources for $45 plus shipping and handling.

Middle East Advocacy

The Office for Church in Society has prepared a 32-page guide to grassroots advocacy on issues of Middle East Peace. **"Middle East Advocacy Handbook"** is available for $1.50 from their offices at 110 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-5694. For bulk order discount information, call 202-543-1517.

Lines in the Sand

"Lines in the Sand" is a 12-minute video which examines the Persian Gulf War, the media and the military. It is a good discussion starter. It is available on loan from OCIS' Washington Office.

New Books Look at Personal Side of the Missionary Experience

by David M. Stowe, former Executive Vice President of the United Church Board for World Ministries

One UCC scholar has remarked that "mission history is a growth industry these days," as universities have discovered that missionary reports and experiences are prime sources for understanding how America came to participate in the global society. Two books, among a number of recent gifts to the United Church Board for World Ministries library, illustrate the more personal and intimate side of the missionary experience of interaction as Christians with foreign cultures.

The Hubbards of Sivas tells the story of Albert and Emma Hubbard's family life and ministry in 30 years of thriving American Board mission in interior Turkey before 1900. Family letters are skillfully woven together in an interpretive narrative by Ambassador Edwin Martin, husband of a Hubbard granddaughter and one-time Embassy official in Ankara. Included are vivid accounts of the first phase of the ethnic conflicts which would eventuate in the massive Armenian massacres of the following generation.

Family Letters from China 1901-1950 is a mosaic of letters covering the profound revolutions that brought China from the Ching dynasty to Mao's Communism. Eunice Bishop, the author, was one of the two daughters of Edward Huntington Smith and Grace Thomas Smith, who continued the family's missionary vocation as long as China was open. Her sister, Helen Huntington Smith, became the first executive of the United Church of Christ Council for Lay Life and Work. A happy book to read in spite of accounts of bandits and Japanese cruelty, poverty and refugees, the tone is set by the opening sentences: "My father was a radiant saint, and my mother was a saint because she had to live with a radiant saint. He radiated joy and eternal optimism and loved China and the Chinese with a lifelong passion."

Information about loan or purchase is available from the librarian at the UCBWM New York office, 475 Riverside Drive, 16th floor, New York, NY 10115.

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Recent Disaster Response from OGHS

One Great Hour of Sharing gifts have made possible the following disaster response. (Many other projects also receive support from One Great Hour of Sharing):

—$20,000 to Church World Service for victims of hunger in former USSR, December 1991 (see p.10)

—20-foot container of supplies to Sudan, January 1992 (see p.12)

—$2,000 to Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for relief to Puerto Rico flood victims, January 1992

—$3,000 to Church World Service for flooding in Texas, January 1992

—$2,000 to Vermont Conference/UCC for victims of fire in Randolph, VT, January 1992

—$2,000 to Vermont Conference/UCC for victims of fire in Hardwick, VT, January 1992

—$5,000 to Southern California Conference/UCC for victims of flooding, January 1992

—$35,000 to Church World Service for Karen Refugees in Southeast Asia, February 1992 (see p.11)

—$50,000 to Church World Service for agricultural project in Armenia, March 1992

—$2,500 South Central Conference/UCC for flooding in Texas, March 1992

Visit to Vietnam and Cambodia

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in the Bible School located on the church compound. The four-year-old Bible School has 15 students enrolled in its five-year program. The delegation learned there is little communication between churches in the two parts of Vietnam, largely as a result of the former political division of the country.

The delegation found the Roman Catholic Church in Ho Chi Minh City filled to overflowing, with many people in the church yard standing near the open windows. The priest reported a very busy program with the church now moving into areas of social work that are still officially prohibited by the government.

Church activity in Vietnam is still under careful scrutiny by the government, which is concerned about foreign funding from right wing and evangelical groups urging a more confrontational position by the church.

The CWS delegation was pleased to have an opportunity to meet with the executive committee of the Kampuchea Christian Committee in Phnom Penh, the first offical contact between the Cambodian Christian community and the National Council of Churches/USA.

There are now 12 congregations in Phnom Penh, only one of which has a building. At the time of the visit, the Cambodian Christian leaders were expressing excitement about a forthcoming joint baptismal service of the congregations at which they expected about 200 to be baptized. They estimated the Protestant community in Cambodia to number about 5,000.

Nicaragua

(continued from page 7)

grievances against the government, which has been slow to act on promises made when they laid down their arms, many of them are just overgrown little boys who find shooting at people more exciting than planting corn. Many, too, are common bandits, robbing busses and trucks for a living. Some analysts say they are being supplied through Honduras, possibly by the right wing elements within the Nicaraguan government or by wealthy Nicaraguans still in Miami.

With the army and police slow to clamp down on these thugs, vigilante groups calling themselves "recompas" (short for "re-companions," or former Sandinista soldiers) are arming themselves in defense.

Pray for peace for Nicaragua. Not just peace as in "stability" (though stability is a precious commodity here just now), but peace as in a reasonable distribution of goods and services so that the poor can survive and live with some degree of dignity.

And don't just stop with prayer. Encourage your legislators to support U.S. policies designed to stabilize the center in Nicaragua rather than the conservative extremists. And to let loose of some of that massive aid promised Nicaragua after the elections.

And, finally, don't swallow the U.S. media reports on Nicaragua without subjecting them to critical scrutiny. The nuances of the current situation are often ignored or deliberately misrepresented, as reporters and editors try to justify 10-year-old ideologies that haven't kept up with the times.